BAKER'S DARKEY PLAYS



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THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE.

WALTER H. BAKER & CO.
No. 23 WINTER STREET
BOSTON

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BAKER'S DARKEY PLAYS

Edited and arranged for publication from the well-known repertoire of "SCHOOLCRAFT AND COES" with all their original "gags" and "stage business."

BY GEO. H. COES.

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A Negro Act in One Scene

ARRANGED BY

GEORGE H. COES

AS PLAYED BY SCHOOLCRAFT AND COES

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CHARACTERS.

LANDLORD.

TENANT.

GHOST.

PROPERTIES.— A carpet bag.



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THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICE.

SCENE. — *An interior.* DUPLEX *discovered.*

DUPLEX. Well, I'm the most unfortunate individual in the world. Everything seems to turn against me. No matter what I do, or which way I turn, or what kind of business I get into, I fail in everything. Now, first I was a clerk in a lawyer's office. He didn't have clients enough to pay for a bowl of soup. Then I tried commercial business. Had no credit, and had to drop that. Tried politics. Attempted to make a speech, when I got on the wrong stump and they raised me. Then I was a bounty jumper. Well, I done well at that until I took a partner, and he jumped off with the funds, and that left me broke again. Now, as a last resort, I had three dollars in my pockets this morning. I got my breakfast, which cost me fifty cents, bought me a Havana cigar, discussed that, and walked down street, found this room to let, rented it, and opened an Intelligence Office; and now if I can get a few applicants that are fools enough to let me have ten or fifteen dollars, I will leave this country and go to New Jersey, or some other foreign clime. Well, now I'll get to work writing, and see if I can catch somebody.

(*Goes and sits at desk, as enter* STEVE SMITHERS, R. H.)

SMITHERS. How do you do, boss?

DUP. (*advancing*). How are you, sir?

SMI. I come here to see if I could get a situation.

DUP. What kind of a situation would you like to have?

SMI. Well, I'd like to be a teller in some bank.

DUP. (*looks at him*). I couldn't get you a situation as teller in a bank, but I might get you a situation as digger in a sand-bank.

SMI. Well, no, dat don't suit me. I want a place where I can handle money.

DUP. Ah, I see! I can get you a situation as bar-keeper. Did you ever tend bar in this city?

SMI. No, sir; I never was here before.

DUP. Could you tend bar? Do you understand that business? I can get you a good situation.

SMI. Well, look here, boss, I don't mind tending bar, but will you guarantee dat after I've been to work a year, I'll own the place? I know lots of fellows dat has bought out dere proprietors in less time dan dat.

DUP. No, I couldn't guarantee you anything. If you're smart enough at the end of the year to own the place, why you are a lucky fellow. You'll have to rely on your ability for that.

SMI. Well, give me de situation. I'll try it, anyhow.

DUP. Before proceeding any farther in this business, you know my terms.

SMI. What, Mike Terms, the blacksmith —

DUP. No, no — my price.

SMI. Oh, Ned Price, the boxer. Yes, I know him.

DUP. No, no, no; you don't understand me. I mean my charges.

SMI. Oh, yes; how much do you get for the situation?

DUP. Two dollars — invariably in advance.

SMI. Two dollars in advance — previous?

DUP. I get you the situation for two dollars.

SMI. (*feels all his pockets for money*). I got a five dollar bill here somewhere. Ah, here it is. There!

DUP. (*takes it*). Five dollars — ah, yes — that's right. What's your name, sir? (*Puts money in pocket.*)

SMI. Steve Smithers.

DUP. Come here and I'll book you. (*Goes to desk; business of* SMITHERS *dropping his hat from his head on the paper* DUPLEX *is writing on, and picking up* DUPLEX'S *hat and putting it on his head,* DUPLEX *remonstrating. This is kept up two or three times, when* DUPLEX *rises and folds up the piece of paper he has written on and advances to front;* SMITHERS *follows.*) There, young man, you take this piece of paper. You know where Broadway is?

SMI. Let me see, dat runs along de front of dis house.

DUP. Yes. You take this piece of paper and go up Broadway until you come to Canal Street, then take the Eighth Avenue car and go to 125th Street, turn to your right, and take the first saloon on your left. Walk right in and hand that note to the man behind the bar.

SMI. (*takes paper and looks at it, suspicious*). Go up Broadway and jump in the canal, and —

DUP. No, no; you misunderstand me. Go up Broadway to Canal Street, take the Eighth Avenue car, go to 125th Street, turn to your right, first saloon on your left, walk right in, and give that note to the man behind the bar.

SMI. (*starts to go, turns back*). Say, I give you five dollars just now, and I want my change. You forgot it, didn't you?

DUP. That's so. Let me see, you want three dollars, don't you?

SMI. Yes, sir.

DUP. Well, upon my word, I have no small bills. Say, won't you be kind enough to stop in when you come back, and I'll hand it to you.

SMI. No, I can carry it myself. Give me the three dollars.

DUP. My dear fellow, it's much safer in my pocket. Besides, I haven't any small bills.

SMI. It's safe in my pocket; besides, I may want to use some of it 'fore I get back. Give me three dollars.

DUP. Don't you understand? I've got your money in my pocket, and it's much safer with me. You see, there's so many thieves, garroters, burglars, pickpockets, and refreshments on the road, you might get robbed. So you stop in when you come back and I'll give you your money.

SMI. Yes, if dem fellows rob me and find out I've got nothing, dey'll kill me.

DUP. (*pushes him towards* R.). No, they will not. Now you go on, and stop in as you come back.

SMI. (*comes back*). Say, look here, give me ten cents to ride up in the cars.

DUP. My dear fellow, you don't want a copper. You get aboard the cars and mention my name to the conductor, and he'll take you anywhere you want to go.

SMI. Mention your name?

DUP. Yes.

SMI. What's your name?

DUP. Duplex.

SMI. Well, look here, Mr. Duplex, don't forget dem three dollars. (*Exit grumbling.*)

DUP. (*sits at desk*). There, I've sent him far enough away. Now if I can catch one more for a five dollar bill, I leave this.

JANE ANN O'HOOLAHAN (*outside*, R.). That's a good boy, Mike. Here's a couple of pennies for you. Now go home and tell your mother to wash your feet. (*Enter slowly, bowing to* DUPLEX, *who rises and comes forward.*) How do you do, boss?

DUP. (*with a goose quill behind his ear; as he bows it sticks in her face*). How are you, madam? What is your business with me?

JANE (*trying to brush something off her face*). There was a friend of mine living in the second ward told me there was an Intelligence Office just opened at No. 16 Broadway, and I come for a situation. Is this the place?

DUP. This is the place, madam. What kind of a situation would you like to have? (*Jabs the quill in her face again; she brushes it away as before.*)

JANE. Well, boss, I don't know. I think I'd like a situation as conductor on the horse railway cars.

DUP. My dear madam, we have no female conductors on the horse-cars. (*Jabs again; she goes to the front brushing her face, saying, "Thunder and ounds, how thick the mosquitoes are!"*)

JANE (*comes back again*). No?

DUP. No!

JANE. Well, boss, I'll go as a driver, then.

DUP. My dear madam, we have no female conductors and drivers on the cars. (*Jabs her again; she discovers the quill and winks at audience.*)

JANE. No? Well, boss, I don't care what it is as long as I get a situation where I can earn an honest penny.

DUP. Now, madam, I might get you a situation as nurse. (*Jabs her again; she dodges and winks at audience.*) Do you understand taking care of children? (*Jabs her again; she slaps his face, and he retreats to* L. H.; *she follows.*)

JANE (*very mad and blustering*). Take that, you blackguard, you!

DUP. How dare you strike me!

JANE. How dare I, is it? If you make me mad, I'd give you a kick up on the forehead.

DUP. I never met with such treatment in the whole course of my life, madam. What do you mean by —

JANE (*menacingly*). What do I mean, is it? If you make me mad, I'll give you a rap on the head that'll do you good.

DUP. She's a perfect Hottentot. I'll go for the police and have her arrested for assault and battery.

JANE (*threateningly*). I'd give you a kick up in the wrist, you divil you. You'll have me arrested! I'll show you.

DUP. How dare you strike me in that manner?

JANE. How dare I, is it? It's aisy for you to be standing there a nodding and prodding and sticking that thing into my eye.

DUP. (*discovers his quill in centre of stage, and finds that it has been the cause of the disturbance; picks up quill and turns to* JANE). My dear madam, I beg ten thousand pardons. I was not aware I had this behind my ear.

JANE (*cooling*). You beg my pardon, is it? Well, I want you to leave off your little Jackeen Kadido tricks wid me, and if you have a situation for me, give it to me; if not, I'll go out.

DUP. (*advances to her apparently afraid*). My price is two dollars, invariably in advance.

JANE (*jumps towards him*). What's that?

DUP. (*frightened*). I say my price is two dollars, invariably in advance.

JANE. What's the matter with you? Have you the St. Anthony's dance?

DUP. No, madam, I have not. I assure you. You hit me such a powerful blow on my ear it rings like a bell all the time.

JANE. Well, come here to me, and don't be foolin' wid me. I have a five dollar bill here in the heel of my fist, what I saved from my last month's wages. (*Takes it out and opens it.*)

DUP. (*takes it and puts it in his pocket*). Yes, so it is; that's right.

JANE (*aside*). Look at him grab it!

DUP. What's your name, madam?

JANE. My name, is it?

DUP. Yes.

JANE. Well, sir, my name is Jane Ann O'Hoolahan.

DUP. I beg your pardon.

JANE. My name?

DUP. Yes.

JANE. Jane Ann O'Hoolahan.

DUP. (*goes to desk*). Come here and I'll book you.

JANE (*to audience*). The big thief. He looks like a pair of tongs.

DUP. Let me see, madam. How do you spell your name?

JANE (*astonished*). And can't you spell it?

DUP. No, I cannot.

JANE. A smart man you are to be keeping an intelligence office, and can't spell a lady's name.

DUP. You see, madam, your name is very peculiar. I never heard it before, so you'll be kind enough to spell it.

JANE. Well, boss, you write it down, and I'll spell it for you.

DUP. All right.

JANE. Are you ready, boss?

DUP. Yes.

JANE. Well! J—a—jay, h—a—Jahanna.

DUP. (*writes*). Johanna!

JANE. O—ho—h—o—ho, — ho—ho--ho—ho—hoolagan.

DUP. All right. Let me see, madam, where are you from?

JANE. Where am I from, is it?

DUP. Yes.

JANE. Well, sir, I am from the city of Cin—shin—nat—ta—ha.

DUP. From where?

JANE. I say I am from the city of Cin—shin—nat—ta—er.

DUP. Oh, Cincinnati. Let me see — that's in the State of Pennsylvania, is it not?

JANE. Cinshinnater in the State of Pinnsylvania?

DUP. Yes.

JANE. No, sir; Cinshinnati is in the State of O—ho—ho.

DUP. I beg your pardon?

JANE. I say Cinshinnati is in the State of O—ho—ho.

DUP. Ohio.

JANE. Oh—hi—e, O—hi—e. I haven't the Yankee touch to my tongue; I can't say it like you, boss.

DUP. (*rises from table folding up a piece of paper and hands it to* JANE). There, madam, you take that paper and go out on Broadway and take one of the stages.

JANE. And get arrested for it?

DUP. No, no. You jump into one of them stages, and go down to City Hall Park. Then take the Third Avenue cars, go to Harlem, go over the long bridge, up into Morrisania to No. 514— Mrs. Honeysuckles's.

JANE. Where? Say, boss, couldn't you say that again, and say it aisy?

DUP. Certainly. You take one of the Broadway stages, ride down to City Hall Park, take Third Avenue car, go to Harlem, over the long bridge, up into Morrisania, No. 514, Mrs. Honeysuckles's. She is a young widow with two children — a nice lady, little to do, a good situation.

JANE. Listen to the tongue of that fellow! Well, I'll go to Mrs. Honeysuckles's, boss. (*Goes towards the door* R., *stops and comes back.*) Hold on! Hold on! Not so fast! Look here, boss!

DUP. Well, madam, what do you want?

JANE. Say, boss, I gave you a five dollar bill a while ago, and you said your price was two dollars.

DUP. So you did; I'd quite forgotten it. (*Feels in his pocket.*)

JANE. Well, you see I didn't, boss.

DUP. Well, I haven't got any small bills about me. Won't you be kind enough to stop in as you come back, and I'll give it to you.

JANE. Is it all right, boss?

DUP. Certainly, ma'am. You don't doubt my honesty?

JANE (*looking at him hesitatingly*). No. (*Aside.*) Nor your rascality either. (*Starts to go.*) Well, good-day, boss.

DUP. Good-day, madam.

JANE. Hold on! I say, boss, it's a long distance up to Mrs. Honeysuckles's, and my shoes is bad. Couldn't you give me a five-cent piece to ride in the cars?

DUP. My dear madam, you don't want any money. All you have to do is to get in the cars and mention my name to the conductor, and he'll set you right down at the door.

JANE. Yes? And what is your name?

DUP. Duplex — Livingstone Duplex.

JANE. Livingstone Duplex and Honeysuckles. That's a funny name. (*Aside.*) Well, I'll go up to Honeysuckles's for the situation, and if that pair of tongs is trying to cheat me, by the verge of my oath when I come back I'll brain him! (*Aloud.*) Well, good-day, boss. (*Exit* R.)

DUP. (*takes his hat and cane and comes forward*). There, I've got rid of her. I've got ten dollars, and now I think I'll go and take a drink. (*Starts to go, when* SMITHERS *enters* R.; *aside.*) Hallo! here's my colored friend back again. (*to* SMITHERS.) Well, you've got back, have you?

SMI. Yes, I've got back.

DUP. Well, you found everything as I told you?

SMI. Yes; I went up to Canal Street, got on de cars, and de conductor come for de fare, and I said, "Duplex — all right."

DUP. Yes, that was right.

SMI. No, it *wasn't* right. He said, "Give me your fare." I told him your name — Duplex; he said, "I don't know Duplex; give me your fare or I put you out." And I said Duplex again, and he chucked me out of the window.

DUP. There's some mistake; there must have been a new conductor on the cars.

SMI. I thought there was a *big* mistake. I landed way out in the street.

DUP. Well, you found the situation all right?

SMI. Yes, oh, yes. Now look here, boss, dat man don't want no bar-keeper. What you give me dis paper for? Take it back.

DUP. Why, you surprise me. You went to the wrong place.

SMI. Yes, he surprised me, too. I went whar you told me.

DUP. Did you find the proprietor in?

SMI. Yes.

DUP. What did you say to him?

SMI. I went in and told him he wanted a bar-keeper, and he said that he didn't; and told me to clear out, dat he didn't allow niggers in dar. I told I wouldn't go out, dat Mr. Duplex sent me here for de situation, and I was going to work; and I commenced to pull off my coat. He says, "Go out or I'll throw you out." I told him no; I paid two dollars for the situation, and I was going to work; and at that he raised dat side of sole leather and swung backwards and forwards, and I was just fool enough to stand right where it stopped every time; so I got out of there, and I have come here to get my money. So give me my three dollars.

DUP. Well, now, I am astonished. I'll find out about this, and see that you are righted in this matter.

SMI. Well, here, give me three dollars, and take this paper dat ain't worth nothing.

DUP. I haven't got the change. You see, I haven't been out since you was here. I am now going down to the bank to make a deposit, and I'll get your change. In the meantime, you stay here and look out for my office while I am gone. If any one comes in, tell them I'll be back in a few minutes.

SMI. Well, look here, Mr. Duplex, don't deposit dat three dollars, and hurry back with my change.

DUP. I won't be gone more than ten minutes.

SMI. Dat fellow's trying to cheat me. I'll stay here, and if he don't come back soon, I'll sell his place out to the highest bidder. (*Goes to desk and commences to write.*)

(*Enter* JANE.)

JANE (*to audience; aside*). Well, I went up to Honeysuckles's. She's a young widow and got no children, and don't want no nurse. (*Looks around.*) Now, I think that man wants to rob me out of my money. (*Goes to desk back of* SMITHERS.) There he is with another man's clothes on. I say, boss — boss! O boss! Bossy, Bossy! I say, boss, if you don't come here to me, I'll go to you. (SMITHERS *don't notice her at all;* JANE *goes up and swings her foot as though she would kick him.*) Boss, I'll rise you if you don't speak to me. (*Kicks him;* STEVE *jumps up from chair, and both go* C. *front.*)

JANE. Oh, it's a nagur!

SMI. You want a situation?

JANE. Well?

SMI. Give me five dollars, and I'll owe you three.

JANE. What are you talking about?

SMI. Give me five dollars, an' I owe you three. Den you get the situation. Go jump in de canal, up 170–11th Street, turn around de corner —

JANE. I went up to Mrs. Honeysuckles's; she don't want no servant. Now I want me money.

SMI. Give me five dollars, and I owe you three.

JANE. I gave you five dollars a while ago. The other man — where is he? Isn't this 16 Broadway?

SMI. Yes, this is No. 16 Broadway.

JANE. Well, I want me money. You're in with that fellow to cheat me.

SMI. I ain't got your money. The other man ain't here. Give me five dollars, and —

JANE (*getting nearer and threatening to strike*). Will you give me me money?

SMI. (*holds up his hands to protect himself*). Go away, Irish, don't you strike me.

(*Both get very much excited, and talk very loud and fast; finally they both stand up to each other, face to face, so they rub their noses together, when* JANE *gets her face all black, turns to audience, keeps talking all the time; then they clinch, when* JANE *throws* SMITHERS *down, then takes him by the coat collar and pants and throws him through set window,* R.; *as she turns to come forward she discovers* DUPLEX *coming from* R. *She throws her arm around his neck and gets him in chancery and pommels him as the scene closes.*)

REMARKS.

There is a good deal of fine business and points to display, which cannot be written down. When it is rehearsed they will come to the performers. Duplex should be dressed as Robert Macaire style, and act very pompous, like a confidence man.

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SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. — *Tom Manly's Home on the Coast of Maine.* "Home Sweet Home." A Villain's Scheme. Father and Son. "For the Land's Sake, who's that Man Bringin' Here?" Rose Prescott's Return. A Stage-struck Rustic. "I 'dough' know." "Ah, Mother, Home Again!" Tom's Surprise. Hammond's Vow. "She Shall be Mine!" The Lottery Ticket. Uncle Davie Tells His Story. Si in a Box. A Fisherman's Love. "Darn it, it's Something You've Got to Get Used to!" A Villain's Proposal. The Old Home Threatened. The Lucky Number. "There Stands the Criminal; I Bought that Ticket of Him."

ACT II. — SCENE 1. *Interior of High Point Lighthouse.* Si and Ruth at Love-making. Uncle Davie Interrupts. Tom's Fortune. Too Late to Save the Old Home. A Wild Night. Nellie's Appeal. "Don't Go, Tom!" The Plot Thickens. The Robbery. SCENE 2. *Exterior of Lighthouse.* Into the Waves. "My God, it's Nellie!" Saved!

ACT III. — SCENE 1. *Hammond's Home.* The Forged Letter. James Renews his Proposal. "I'd Rather Die than Marry You!" SCENE 2. *Tom's Home in Boston.* James's Visit. A Message of Love. Si's Letter. Ruth indignant. "Si, Come Right Here to Your Mother." SCENE 3. *A Child's Vision.* Death of Little Nellie. "O God, Thy Will be Done!"

ACT IV. — *Rose's Home in Maine.* Tom's Disclosure. Uncle Davie's Joy. "There's Something Wrong Here." Marriage Bells. The Accusation. "My God, the Fool has Found Me Out!" "Hug Him, Ruth, He Deserves It." A Wedding Interrupted. "That Girl is my Daughter!" A Villain Foiled. "We're going to have a Wedding here yet!" A Fisherman's Luck.

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